

## World War II

This is by no means exhaustive just a general overview! If it was more detailed we would be studying this for the rest of the year!!!!

### I. Beginning of the war in Europe

#### A. Financial upheaval in the world after the Great War led to the uprising of dictators hungry for power

##### 1. Adolf Hitler: Germany

- a. Rise of the Nazi Party and Hitler occurred throughout the 1920's and 30's
- b. Hitler was very engaging and mesmerizing
- c. Began to re-arm Germany which was against the Treaty of Versailles

- His goal was to build up the military in order to take over the world and rid the world of unacceptable people

##### 2. Benito Mussolini: Italy

- a. Fascism

##### 3. Hideki Tojo: Japan

- a. Brutal
- b. Wanted more land than the islands of Japan had
- c. Began conquering China and spread out to the south Pacific as a way to get rid of European and American influence in that portion of the world

#### B. Axis Alliance

1. Germany
2. Italy
3. Japan
4. Would go to war for each other if one of them was attacked

#### C. Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact

1. Hitler and Joseph Stalin (Russia) join forces to decide how to best conquer and divide the country of Poland
2. Hitler will eventually stab Stalin in the back and try to conquer Russia

#### D. Hitler Takes over Europe (Mussolini heads for Africa)

1. Germany moves into Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938

2. By 1940, Hitler has taken over most of Europe
  - a. By the beginning of June, he had Denmark, Norway, Finland, Luxembourg, and Belgium
  - b. June 12, having conquered Belgium moved into France and took control of Paris on June 25 when the government surrendered
3. With Europe conquered, Germany turns toward Great Britain
  - a. Battle of Britain consisted of much aerial bombing even over night
  - b. British refused to give in to the demands of Germany and won the Battle
4. After not defeating Great Britain, Germany turned on Russia

## II. America's role in the early European War

- A. Americans are all for isolation the president is not
- B. Still not fully out of the depression, many believed we should take care of our own nation before helping the rest of the world.
- C. Neutrality Act of 1935
  1. No munitions sold to nations who were in a time of war
  2. President could decide which nations were at war
  3. Cash and Carry Act
    - a. Warring factions could purchase weapons but had to pay in cash and transport it themselves
  4. Neutrality Act of 1937
- D. Roosevelt wanted to be more involved in the war than we were
  1. Urged Congress to pass re-armament laws
  2. Congress gave \$525 million to be divided into the three branches of the military
  3. Stockpile Act of 1939
    - a. \$125 million for war materials to be stockpiled
  4. Created the War Resources Board to develop a re-mobilization plan for America
  5. Congress approved a 1 year military draft that was eventually extended until 1948
  6. FDR changed his cabinet to be more war ready
  7. FDR also expanded industry so more planes and boats could be built

#### E. Lend Lease Act

1. Because of how Germany bombed Britain, the British used a good portion of the money allocated for war readiness by building bomb shelters for the people
2. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill asked America for help
3. Congress authorized \$ 7 Billion to put but to use lending equipment and boats to the British in return for military use of bases around the world
4. Also helped to repair any British ships damaged by submarines

#### F. Atlantic Charter

1. Although in almost constant contact, FDR and Churchill did not meet until 1940
2. They joined together to create the Atlantic Charter
  - a. Drafted a list of common things they wanted to accomplish such as ...
    - No territorial gain for either US or GB
    - Trade barriers were lowered
    - Freedom from want and fear
    - Disarmament of aggressor nations
    - others
  - b. drafted a list of Anti-Axis goals
3. By the Spring of 1941, German subs were firing on American ships because we just weren't neutral enough

#### G. America and Japan

1. As Japan became more aggressive, diplomatic relations between the two countries deteriorated
2. Japan **WANTED** to be at war with the U.S.
3. Japan was moving away from just attacking in China going after the Dutch East Indies and other South Pacific islands
4. America placed sanctions against them controlling how much rubber and oil Japan was able to obtain which made Japan very unhappy

5. By November of 1941, Japan was preparing to attack America but led U.S. to believe that things were just fine between the two nations
6. American military was expecting the attack
  - a. They were able to decode many Japanese transmissions
  - b. Expecting to have the attack be on Guam or the Philippines

III. "December 7, 1941: a Date which will live in infamy"

- A. Attack was early
- B. Battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and planes on the ground and in port
  1. Carriers were out at sea on maneuvers raising the question as to whether or not FDR and military had other knowledge of attack
- C. Japan had a two wave attack launched from sea (American military was unable to track them)
- D. At the same time as the attack on Pearl, Japan was also attacking at some of the other islands
- E. America lost a good portion of its Pacific Fleet to sinking or heavy repair
- F. Japan declared war on America
- G. December 8, FDR goes before Congress asking for a declaration of War
- H. Germany and Italy declared war on America
- I. Some warning signs of attack on Hawaii
  1. Phone call from Japan to a Japanese American dentist about the weather. The dentist did not know the caller
  2. Submarine was fired upon at mouth of harbor
  3. Fishermen saw some submarines also
  4. Radar, which was a relatively new technology, spotted what they thought was planes. When it was reported to the superior officer by some privates watching the radar, was dismissed as a flock of birds

#### IV. The War in Europe

##### A. Dec 22, 1941

1. Japan had landed on and was quickly conquering the Philippines
2. American military was evacuated to island of Corregidor including the nurses and doctors
  - Those military (soldiers and nurses) who were not evacuated were placed in concentration camps
  - Bataan Death march
3. Douglas MacArthur who was in charge of the Pacific military was secretly transferred to Australia
4. Corregidor was full of tunnels and they were used for headquarters, for both Allied military and Filipino government, and hospitals
5. After heavy bombing, Japan took Corregidor but MacArthur returned and saved both this island fortress and

##### B. Churchill, FDR, and Stalin (although least happy member of big three) agreed to send American and allied troops to North Africa to fight against Nazi General Erwin Rommel

1. General Dwight D. Eisenhower took command of the allies and even though Hitler sent reinforcements it still wasn't enough and the Allied forces won
2. After defeating Nazi's, Allied troops headed for Italy through Sicily to get to Rome
3. Getting to Rome took about 1 year
4. As the Allies got closer, Mussolini ran to Hitler (Mussolini was captured and executed in 1945)
5. Hitler continued to pour reinforcements in Italy but it was a losing battle
6. Allied forces are victorious and reclaim Italy (Italy officially surrendered in 1943 but Mussolini went north and tried to re-establish control)
7. Allies still needed to get through Europe

##### C. D-Day is coming

1. By January 1944, Eisenhower is made "Supreme Allied Commander" in charge of all allied troops
2. Preparation for Operation Overlord is under way

3. Hitler knows an Allied Invasion is coming (he expects it in the northern portion of France in Calais)
4. June 6, 1944: Allies head for the beaches at Normandy
  - a. 3 million soldiers
  - b. 11,000 aircraft
  - c. 2,000 water vessels
5. Took the Allied soldiers two months to break through the German lines
6. By mid September 1944, Allied forces have liberated France and Belgium and are fighting through to Germany through the other nations of Europe to liberate them as well as defeat the Germans

#### D. Battle of the Bulge

1. Dec 1944: Allies stop due to Fuel shortages
2. Germany takes full advantage of this break and there is a tremendous battle which gives the Hitler 6 extra weeks of power
3. Inevitable happened and Germany was pushed back
4. Europe was liberated
5. Hitler killed himself
6. May 8, 1945 VE Day

#### E. Yalta Conference

1. While all of this was going on...
  - a. Churchill, Stalin, and FDR meet together in Poland to discuss how to defeat Germany and how to divide it up
  - b. They also discussed who should control Asia
  - c. As well as how to stop Japan
2. After this intense and tense meeting, FDR returns home
  - a. He recently was inaugurated into his fourth term even though he was urged to give up the presidency due to ill health
  - b. Came back from the meeting noticeably in decline
3. April of 1945, FDR and his mistress go to Warm Springs, GA. While sitting for a portrait he complains of a massive headache
4. FDR had a massive cerebral hemorrhage and dies
5. Harry Truman, his very inexperienced VP, is inaugurated and leads the world to victory

V. War with Japan

A. Japanese were fierce fighters

B. Taught “win or die”

1. Don't be captured kill yourself (and many did)

C. Major Battles

1. Allied military had to island hop to take back one island at a time
2. Guadal Canal
3. Midway
4. Philippines
5. Battle of Leyte Gulf
  - a. Largest sea battle in history
  - b. Huge blow to Japan's navy destroying 3 battleships, 9 cruisers, 10 destroyers, and 180 aircraft
6. Iwo Jima
  - a. February 1945
  - b. Big time Marine battle
  - c. Island fortress which the Allies needed to launch the attack on Okinawa from
  - d. 21,000 Japanese soldiers to defeat
  - e. American casualties
    - 6800 dead
    - 20,000 wounded
7. Okinawa
  - a. Bloodiest Pacific battle (largely because so many were killing themselves to avoid capture)
  - b. Began April 1, 1945 (Easter)
  - c. Captured by June of 1945

D. Manhattan Project

1. Race for the bomb began in Germany (they were this close)
2. FDR worked on this throughout the war
3. Los Alamos, NM was a secret city where most of the work was done
4. VP Truman did not even know about this project until after he became President
5. Truman decided to use it to stop the war with Japan

6. First bomb (little boy) went on the “Enola Gay” and was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan August 6, 1945
7. Japan did not surrender
8. Second bomb (FatMan) was loaded up and dropped on Nagasaki, Japan August 9, 1945
9. VJ DAY: August 14, 1945 Japan surrendered unconditionally

## VI. Other stuff you need to know

### A. Economy

1. WW2 was the best thing that could happen for America (and the world...even Hitler’s craziness was a good thing because it helped bring Germany out of the Depression)
2. Factories mobilized for more and different goods
3. Many women did factory work including build planes and ships
  - Completed traditionally male jobs (6 million)
  - Rosie the Riveter
  - 200,000 joined military
4. Rationing
  - a. Ration books were issued to allow certain products to be saved for war goods
  - b. Nylon , rubber, sugar, gasoline, coffee, bicycles, meat, etc
5. Victory Gardens
6. Victory Speed
  - Reduced speed limit to help conserve fuel
7. Extra taxation: 45% of war debt was paid by taxation
  - Axis taxes

### B. Culture

1. Women’s clothing changed again
  - a. No stocking because nylon was needed for war
    - Painted designs on their legs to make it appear like they were wearing stockings
  - b. Shorter skirts to save material
  - c. Shorter hair to keep it out of machines
  - d. Smaller hats
  - e. Smaller swimsuits



- f. Makeup and deodorant were not manufactured because they were considered a nonessential product
- g. Another Sexual revolution based on clothing styles because more female body was shown

## 2. Movies

- a. Lots were made many of them war movies
- b. Always showed the news before feature film
- c. Many of the major actors/actresses either went to war or participated in War Bond drives or USO

## 3. USO

- a. Designed to provide a touch of home to the soldiers
- b. Performers went to the troops and sang or gave comedy shows
- c. Canteens were places soldiers could go and relax (play games, eat, dance)

## C. Japanese American Internment Camps

1. Japanese Americans were persecuted after attacks on Pearl Harbor
2. Rounded up and sent away with only what they could carry
3. Even before the war, this people group was very segregated
4. Only become a citizen if you were second generation (born here known as Nisei)
  - a. 80,000 were citizens
  - b. 127,000 total
5. Politicians encouraged F DR that the Japanese Americans were loyal to Japan and should be arrested
  - a. 40% of West Coasters believed this
  - b. Evacuated from the west coast
  - c. Shipped to "assembly centers"
  - d. Given little or no time to prepare (sell homes and businesses, pack)
  - e. Places they were sent were not really habitable (some were housed in stables for the duration of the war)
6. Camps were located in 7 states
7. Armed guards and fences kept these "traitors" in
8. Very little supplies were given to them and much of life was done communally
9. Tried to make them sign a loyalty oath

10. 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment

- a. All Japanese
- b. Taken from camps
- c. Mostly from the younger generation who wanted to prove that they were American's and loyal only to America
- d. Most highly decorated regiment in military history included 21 medal of honors
- e. 4,000 men signed up in 1943 but used 14,000 by end of war

11. Apology not given

- a. By 1968, government began to make reparation payments to those they had held
- b. By 1988 Congress had passed legislation awarding payments of \$20,000 to those of the 60,000 people still alive
- c. U.S. Government has never officially apologized to these people for the mistrust

D. Holocaust

- 1. Adolf Hitler had it out for the Jews, gays, gypsies, old, infirm, and the mentally challenged
- 2. Under his orders, as many undesirable races were rounded up and placed in concentration camps many of which were death camps whether it was to work them to death or gas them or starve them
- 3. The Nazi's took everything they had
- 4. Men like Oscar Schindler did what they could to stop this injustice doing what they could to save as many as they could
- 5. Hitler's men tortured these people who were sent to these camps to see how much pain they could take among other things
- 6. 6 million people of Jewish descent were killed
- 7. American and Soviet troops were the ones to liberate the camps
- 8. People in the country side where the camps were turned a blind eye to what was going on
- 9. Many politicians of the time (FDR included) turned a blind eye to the plight of the Jews who attempted to escape Europe choosing to believe after Hitler took over that the more important issue was not saving the Jews but rather stopping Hitler
- 10. Today, there are still some people who don't believe that the Holocaust happened

11. More notorious camps

- a. Auschwitz
- b. Bergen Belsen
- c. Ravensbruck
- d. Dachau
- e. Buchenwald